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ABSTRACT

This fact sheet reports findings of an investigation of the reported difficulties experienced by federal agencies in retaining career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES). These responses to a mailed questionnaire are highlighted: (1) the most important reasons for leaving are agency-specific (dissatisfaction with top management, dissatisfaction with political appointees) and government-wide (frustration with proposed and actual changes to compensation, too few bonuses); (2) the least important reasons fall into the same categories as well as a third--job-specific; (3) important reasons for leaving tended to be agency-specific; (4) patterns emerged in the reasons given for leaving when they were grouped according to how SES members left; (5) a majority of SES members said they took another paid position; and (6) although a majority said they would not advise a person to enter public service, SES members frequently said they enjoyed their careers overall. These appendixes follow the two-page report: questionnaire objectives, scope, and methodology; narrative material and data in table form summarizing questionnaire results regarding reasons why senior executives left; and the annotated questionnaire. (YLB)

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United States General Accounting Office

Fact Sheet for the Honorable Vic Fazio, House of Representatives

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

Reasons Why Career Members Left in Fiscal Year 1985

ED279794

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United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

General Government Division

B-226026

August 12, 1987

The Honorable Vic Fazio
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Fazio:

You requested that we examine the reported difficulties experienced by federal agencies in retaining career members of the Senior Executive Service (SES). In subsequent meetings with your office we agreed to determine the characteristics of members who left SES in fiscal year 1985, why they left, and, if they took another paid position, what employment areas they entered.

To obtain the requested information, we sent a questionnaire to all SES members who left their positions in fiscal year 1985. The questionnaire responses are highlighted below and discussed in greater detail in the appendixes.

-- In fiscal year 1985, 615 career SES members, representing 9.9 percent of the average SES career membership during the year, left SES. Of these, 469 former SES members completed our questionnaire. According to their responses, 68.4 percent retired, 19.6 percent resigned, 7.5 percent stayed in the government but accepted a GS-15 position, and 4.5 percent left under other circumstances.

-- SES members noted a wide variety of reasons for leaving their positions in fiscal year 1985. The reasons they said were most important can be put into two broad categories: agency-specific reasons, such as dissatisfaction with top management and dissatisfaction with political appointees; and governmentwide reasons, including frustration with proposed and actual changes to compensation and too few bonuses available. The least important reasons for leaving also fall into these two categories, as well as a third category--job-specific reasons, such as job required too much or too little travel.

-- Analysis of the most important reasons given for leaving SES, grouped by agency, show that certain reasons for leaving are viewed as more important by former members of some agencies than by former members of other agencies. For example, SES members whose last assignment was in one of two departments--Treasury and Health and Human Services--were more likely than SES members at other agencies to name dissatisfaction with the distribution of both bonuses and rank awards as being of great or very great importance in their decisions to leave.

-- Patterns emerge in the reasons given for leaving when they are grouped according to how SES members left. For instance, SES members who resigned were more than twice as likely to stress salary and career development concerns than those who retreated to GS-15 positions or those who retired.

-- SES members who left in fiscal year 1985 were generally similar to those who were employed as of December 31, 1985, in terms of reported characteristics such as educational level, years of federal executive service, and occupation.

-- A majority of SES members said they took another paid position after leaving SES, as we reported in an earlier fact sheet (GAO/GGD 87-36FS, Jan. 1987).

-- While a majority of SES members said they would not advise a person starting a career today to enter public service, SES members frequently commented that overall they enjoyed their careers.

As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this fact sheet until 30 days from the issue date. At that time, we will send copies to the Office of Personnel Management and other interested parties upon request. If further information is needed, please call me on 275-6204.

Sincerely yours,

Rosslyn S. Kleeman
Senior Associate Director

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Abbreviations

HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
SES	Senior Executive Service

QUESTIONNAIRE OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

We developed and sent out a questionnaire to all 615 SES members who left SES in fiscal year 1985 (the most recent year in which information on SES was available when we conducted our survey) to record information about why they left SES and to determine where they went (see table III.4). We also sent questionnaires to a random sample of 380 SES members employed by the federal government as of December 31, 1985. OPM provided us with both address lists. Selected information from this questionnaire can be found for comparison purposes in tables III.1, III.2, III.5, III.6, and III.7. More detailed evaluation of this questionnaire will be provided in a separate report.

In addition to being asked to provide some information about themselves, respondents were given a list of 55 possible reasons for leaving SES and were asked to check how important or unimportant each one was in their decision to leave SES.

Instrument development, data collection, and evaluation

In designing the questionnaire instrument, we reviewed other questionnaires that had been previously used to collect data from SES members. This review included data collection efforts by the Office of Personnel Management, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Federal Executive Institute Alumni Association, and other government agencies. We considered questions asked in these questionnaires, and added some of our own. In particular, we tried to capture all possible reasons that one might have for leaving the SES. To ensure that our questionnaire was easily understandable, we pretested it with former SES members before sending it out in April 1986. In June 1986 we sent out follow-up questionnaires to those who had not yet responded.

We edited the completed questionnaires for consistency, coded responses and entered them into the computer, and verified the accuracy of the computer data sets.

Questionnaire response rate

We obtained a 76 percent response rate (percent usable of total mailed) and a 82 percent completion rate (usable returns as percent of total mailed less undeliverable and ineligible). The final respondent group consisted of 469 SES members. Table I.1 summarizes the questionnaire returns.

Table I.1:
SES Questionnaire Return Rates

Questionnaire returns	Number	Percent[a]
Usable returns	469	76.3
Undeliverable	19	3.1
Ineligible:		
Deceased	17	2.8
Still in SES	4	0.7
Refusal or incapacitated	2	0.3
Questionnaires delivered but not returned	104	16.9
Total	615	100.1

[a]Percentage does not add to 100 due to rounding.

Not all respondents to our questionnaire answered all the questions. Less responded to the questions at the end of the questionnaire than to those questions at the beginning. This may have been due to fatigue or the detailed nature of the questions in the last section. See appendix IV for the number who did not respond to each question.

REASONS WHY SENIOR EXECUTIVES LEFT SES

In fiscal year 1985, an estimated 9.9 percent of career executives left SES. To determine why they left, we sent them a questionnaire listing 55 specific reasons for leaving SES. We asked them to rate, on a scale ranging from little or no importance to very great importance, the influence each reason had in their decisions. SES members left for a number of reasons, although 40 percent of the respondents cited five or fewer reasons as having great or very great importance. We did not ask them to identify the most important reason and cannot say that any one was decisive in the decision to leave the SES. The 10 most important reasons for leaving, as indicated by the percent of great and very great responses, are shown in table II.1.

Table II.1:
10 Most Important Reasons for Leaving SES in Fiscal Year 1985

Reason	Great and very great importance number	Number of respondents	Percent[a]
Dissatisfaction with top management	181	383	47.3
Dissatisfaction with political appointees	157	364	43.1
Unfair distribution of bonuses (e.g., favoritism)	169	408	41.4
Frustration with proposed and actual changes to compensation (i.e., pay, retirement, etc.)	164	411	39.9
Frustration with criticism of federal workers by press, politicians, or public	153	415	36.9
Unfair distribution of rank awards (e.g., favoritism)	143	396	36.1
Dissatisfaction with agency management practices (i.e., amount of freedom given to manage job as saw fit)	136	387	35.1
Too few bonuses available	139	409	34.0
Desire to avoid proposed revisions which could decrease retirement benefits	105	311	33.8
Too much political interference	124	370	33.5

[a]Percentages calculated by dividing the number of great and very great importance responses by the total number of responses. Total number of responses excludes the not applicable responses and nonresponses.

Comments on several of these issues were provided by some respondents. While these comments provide additional perspectives on these issues, they can only be taken as representative of the views of those who elected to write them,

and cannot be generalized as those of questionnaire respondents as a whole. Concerns were expressed by 57 people regarding the public or Administrations' negative attitude toward federal workers. One respondent commented that "The public degradation of civil service . . . is destroying the desire of people like myself to stay in the government." Other comments conveying dissatisfaction with the SES bonus system were made by 28 SES members. One comment exemplifying this dissatisfaction noted that "The SES bonus system is viewed as a means to supplement salary rather than reflect performance." Concerns about the qualifications of political appointees were voiced by 20 individuals. One respondent maintained that incompetent political appointees "kept careerists off balance, uninformed." Other comments we received, from 25 people, dealt with political interference. One respondent commented that the "SES system allows (encourages) political influence to be exercised in fields which must be immune to bias if the goal of the service is to be met."

In spite of comments from 55 SES members concerning salary and benefits, the separate issues of salary and fringe benefits were not ranked among the 10 most important reasons for leaving. Questionnaire results show that for 26.8 percent and 13.7 percent of the respondents, inadequate salary and inadequate fringe benefits, respectively, were of great or very great importance in their decisions to leave.

The most important reasons for leaving as indicated by the individual SES members can be divided into two categories--governmentwide and agency-specific. The least important reasons come under a third category--job-specific. For instance, job-specific factors, such as job was too challenging, were noted as having little significance in SES members' decisions to leave. Table II.2 lists the least important reasons for leaving on the basis of the percent of respondents who indicated these reasons were of some, little, or no importance in their decisions to leave.

Table II.2:
10 Least Important Reasons for Leaving SES in Fiscal Year 1985

Reason	Some and little or no importance number	Number of respondents	Percent[a]
Job required too little travel	312	322	96.9
Job was too challenging	319	330	96.7
Desire to avoid reassignment within the same geographical area	254	265	95.9
Job required too much travel	332	352	94.3
Desire to obtain social security coverage	331	355	93.2
Job required too much work	334	369	90.5
Dissatisfaction with coworkers	297	329	90.3
Dissatisfaction with subordinates	299	332	90.1
Lack of job security	329	369	89.2
Desired geographic reassignment not available	249	282	88.3

[a]Percentages calculated by dividing the number of some and little or no importance responses by the total number of responses. Total number of responses excludes the not applicable responses and nonresponses.

Agency and type of separation are related to reasons for leaving

Certain groups of SES members cited certain reasons for leaving SES in fiscal year 1985 as having great or very great importance in their decisions to leave more frequently than other groups. Two variables, agency and type of separation, are associated with these reasons for leaving. In our analysis we included only those agencies which had 10 or more questionnaire respondents.

SES members whose last assignments were in the Departments of Transportation, Commerce, or Agriculture more frequently named dissatisfaction with political appointees and top management, and too much political interference as being particularly important in their decisions to leave SES. As shown in tables II.3, II.4, and II.5, these three departments were above the average for all respondents in the great and very great dimension of all three categories. Conversely, respondents from several agencies, including the Veterans Administration, and the Departments of Justice and Treasury, indicated that these factors did not have substantial importance in their decisions to leave.

Concerning the distribution of bonuses and rank awards, SES members whose last assignments were in the Departments of Treasury and Health and Human Services more frequently named unfair distribution of both bonuses and rank awards as being particularly important in their decisions to leave SES. As shown in tables II.6 and II.7, these two departments were above the average for all respondents in the great and very great dimension for both categories.

Availability of bonuses and frustration with proposed and actual changes to compensation (i.e., pay, retirement, etc.) also seem to be related to respondents from particular agencies. For three agencies, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Departments of Treasury and Justice, the percentages of respondents who indicated that both these reasons were of great or very great importance in their decisions to leave, as shown in tables II.8 and II.9, were above the percentages for all respondents.

Table II.3:

SES Members' Dissatisfaction With Political Appointees by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	157	43.1	37	10.2	170	46.7	364
Transportation	17	77.3	2	9.1	3	13.6	22
Commerce	12	70.6	2	11.8	3	17.6	17
Agriculture	10	58.8	2	11.8	5	29.4	17
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	3	50.0	0	0.0	3	50.0	6
Interior	9	47.4	1	5.3	9	47.4	19
H.H.S.	12	46.2	1	3.8	13	50.0	26
Energy	8	34.8	5	21.7	10	43.5	23
Secretary of Defense	9	34.6	0	0.0	17	65.4	26
Army	4	28.6	0	0.0	10	71.4	14
Navy	7	28.0	4	16.0	14	56.0	25
Justice	2	20.0	2	20.0	6	60.0	10
Treasury	5	15.6	2	6.3	25	78.1	32
N.A.S.A.	4	13.8	6	20.7	19	65.5	29
Veterans Admin.	1	10.0	1	10.0	8	80.0	10

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Table II.4:

SES Members' Dissatisfaction With Top Management by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	181	47.3	49	12.8	153	39.9	383
Commerce	15	78.9	0	0.0	4	21.1	19
Transportation	16	69.6	2	8.7	5	21.7	23
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	5	62.5	2	25.0	1	12.5	8
Agriculture	9	52.9	1	5.9	7	41.2	17
Army	9	47.4	2	10.5	8	42.1	19
N.A.S.A.	15	45.5	9	27.3	9	27.3	33
Interior	8	44.4	2	11.1	8	44.4	18
H.H.S.	12	41.4	1	3.4	16	55.2	29
Navy	10	38.5	5	19.2	11	42.3	26
Energy	8	33.3	8	33.3	8	33.3	24
Secretary of Defense	7	29.2	2	8.3	15	62.5	24
Treasury	10	28.6	4	11.4	21	60.0	35
Justice	2	20.0	0	0.0	8	80.0	10
Veterans Admin.	2	18.2	3	27.3	6	54.5	11

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Table II.5:

SES Members' Concern With Too Much Political Interference by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	124	33.5	33	8.9	213	57.6	370
Interior	11	61.1	0	0.0	7	38.9	18
Commerce	9	60.0	2	13.3	4	26.7	15
Agriculture	10	58.8	0	0.0	7	41.2	17
Transportation	13	56.5	2	8.7	8	34.8	23
H.H.S.	12	42.9	1	3.6	15	53.6	28
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	2	33.3	1	16.7	3	50.0	6
Secretary of Defense	7	29.2	0	0.0	17	70.8	24
Energy	6	26.1	4	17.4	13	56.5	23
Navy	5	20.0	2	8.0	18	72.0	25
Treasury	5	16.1	1	3.2	25	80.6	31
N.A.S.A.	4	12.1	6	18.2	23	69.7	33
Justice	1	10.0	0	0.0	9	90.0	10
Army	1	5.6	1	5.6	16	88.9	18
Veterans Admin.	0	0.0	2	16.7	10	83.3	12

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Table II.6:

SES Members' Concern With Unfair Distribution of Bonuses by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	169	41.4	62	15.2	177	43.4	408
Treasury	20	55.6	3	8.3	13	36.1	36
H.H.S.	14	48.3	4	13.8	11	37.9	29
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	4	44.4	2	22.2	3	33.3	9
Interior	8	44.4	2	11.1	8	44.4	18
Agriculture	7	43.8	5	31.3	4	25.0	16
Transportation	9	42.9	1	4.8	11	52.4	21
Justice	5	41.7	2	16.7	5	41.7	12
N.A.S.A.	17	39.5	8	18.6	18	41.9	43
Commerce	7	38.9	4	22.2	7	38.9	18
Veterans Admin.	5	38.5	4	30.8	4	30.8	13
Secretary of Defense	9	34.6	0	0.0	17	65.4	26
Energy	8	32.0	6	24.0	11	44.0	25
Navy	9	30.0	7	23.3	14	46.7	30
Army	6	26.1	4	17.4	13	56.5	23

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Table II.7:

SES Members' Concern With Unfair Distribution of Rank Awards by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	143	36.1	50	12.6	203	51.3	396
Veterans Admin.	7	53.8	2	15.4	4	30.8	13
Treasury	17	48.6	2	5.7	16	45.7	35
H.H.S.	13	46.4	3	10.7	12	42.9	28
Agriculture	7	43.8	4	25.0	5	31.3	16
Commerce	7	38.9	3	16.7	8	44.4	18
Interior	6	35.3	0	0.0	11	64.7	17
Transportation	7	33.3	1	4.8	13	61.9	21
Navy	10	33.3	6	20.0	14	46.7	30
Secretary of Defense	8	30.8	0	0.0	18	69.2	26
Energy	7	28.0	4	16.0	14	56.0	25
N.A.S.A.	11	27.5	7	17.5	22	55.0	40
Justice	3	27.3	2	18.2	6	54.5	11
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	2	20.0	3	30.0	5	50.0	10
Army	4	19.0	2	9.5	15	71.4	21

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Table II.6:

SES Members' Concern With Too Few Bonuses Available by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	139	34.0	67	16.4	203	49.6	409
Justice	5	41.7	1	8.3	6	50.0	12
Treasury	15	40.5	4	10.8	18	48.6	37
N.A.S.A.	17	40.5	7	16.7	18	42.9	42
H.H.S.	11	37.9	4	13.8	14	48.3	29
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	3	33.3	0	0.0	6	66.7	9
Commerce	6	33.3	4	22.2	8	44.4	18
Interior	6	33.3	3	16.7	9	50.0	18
Navy	11	33.3	6	18.2	16	48.5	33
Energy	8	32.0	5	20.0	12	48.0	25
Army	7	31.8	2	9.1	13	59.1	22
Veterans Admin.	4	30.8	4	30.8	5	38.5	13
Secretary of Defense	7	25.9	7	25.9	13	48.1	27
Agriculture	3	20.0	3	20.0	9	60.0	15
Transportation	3	13.6	8	36.4	11	50.0	22

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Table 11.9:

SES Members' Frustration With Proposed and Actual Changes to Compensation by Agency a/

Agency	Great/very great importance		Moderate importance		Some/little or no importance		Total
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
Total (all respondents)	164	39.9	56	13.6	191	46.5	411
N.A.S.A.	26	60.5	11	25.6	6	14.0	43
Transportation	10	52.6	2	10.5	7	36.8	19
Nuclear Reg. Comm.	4	50.0	0	0.0	4	50.0	8
Navy	15	46.9	8	25.0	9	28.1	32
Justice	5	45.5	2	18.2	4	36.4	11
Treasury	16	44.4	3	8.3	17	47.2	36
Energy	12	41.4	3	10.3	14	48.3	29
Secretary of Defense	9	34.6	3	11.5	14	53.8	26
H.H.S.	9	33.3	2	7.4	16	59.3	27
Commerce	6	31.6	2	10.5	11	57.9	19
Veterans Admin.	4	30.8	1	7.7	8	61.5	13
Agriculture	4	25.0	3	18.8	9	56.3	16
Army	5	23.8	2	9.5	14	66.7	21
Interior	2	11.1	3	16.7	13	72.2	18

a/ Frequencies and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX II

Type of separation

Other patterns emerge in the reasons for leaving when examined by how SES members left. In particular, people who resigned (91 or 19.6 percent of all respondents) tended to cite different reasons as having great or very great importance in their decisions to leave than people who retired (318 or 68.4 percent of all respondents) or retreated to GS-15 positions (35 or 7.5 percent of all respondents). Selected reasons for leaving that were particularly significant to those who resigned as opposed to those who retired or retreated are shown in table II.10 along with the responses of those who retired or retreated to GS-15 positions.

In fact, those who resigned more than twice as frequently checked three of the four reasons on this list as being of great or very great importance than those who either retired or retreated. For example, salary not adequate was indicated as an important reason for leaving by 44.1 percent of those who resigned, only 15.4 percent of those who retreated, and 21.5 percent of those who retired.

Table II.10:
Selected Reasons for Leaving of Importance to SES Members Who Resigned

	Number and percent of great and very great responses a/		
	Resigned	Retreated	Retired
Opportunities for career advancement (i.e., higher level of responsibility) were inadequate	54.2% (45 of 83)	13.6% (3 of 22)	26.5% (68 of 257)
Realized goals in the position and desired a change	49.4% (41 of 83)	39.1% (9 of 23)	19.5% (48 of 246)
Opportunities for career development (i.e., growing through job) were inadequate	46.3% (38 of 82)	15.0% (3 of 20)	21.5% (55 of 256)
Salary not adequate	44.1% (37 of 84)	15.4% (2 of 13)	21.5% (59 of 275)

a/ Numbers and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses.

Reasons cited as being of great importance or very great importance for those who retreated are shown in table II.11. The table also shows that those who retired and resigned much less frequently cited these reasons for leaving.

Table II.11:
Selected Reasons for Leaving of Importance to SES Members Who Retreated to a GS-15 Position

	Number and percent of great and very great responses a/		
	Retreated	Resigned	Retired
Desired assignment not available	50.0% (7 of 14)	11.3% (8 of 71)	16.9% (35 of 207)
Job required too much time for administrative duties	50.0% (11 of 22)	13.8% (11 of 80)	15.0% (38 of 253)
Personal goals and values differed from organization's	48.0% (12 of 25)	28.6% (22 of 77)	25.0% (64 of 256)
Desire to geographically relocate	47.4% (9 of 19)	10.0% (7 of 70)	4.9% (10 of 204)
Personal concerns not related to work (e.g., health, spouse's career, etc.)	45.0% (9 of 20)	9.6% (7 of 73)	13.1% (31 of 236)
Frustration with bureacracy (administrative/ bureacratic requirements)	44.0% (11 of 25)	22.1% (19 of 86)	31.7% (90 of 284)
Job created too much stress	43.5% (10 of 23)	12.4% (10 of 81)	14.5% (39 of 269)

a/ Numbers and percentages exclude nonresponses and not applicable responses.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SES MEMBERS WHO LEFT IN FISCAL YEAR 1985

Characteristics of SES members who left were generally similar to those of SES members who were employed by the federal government as of December 31, 1985, in such areas as occupations, years of executive experience, and education levels.

The distribution of individuals among the occupational categories is similar in both groups. Engineers and architects, for instance, comprised an estimated 10.8 percent of SES in December 1985 and represented 10.5 percent of those who left.

Table III.1:
Comparison of the Occupational Makeup of 1985 SES Members With SES Members Who Left Their Positions in 1985 a/

Occupational category	Percent of 1985 SES members b/	Percent of SES members who left in 1985
Accounting, Budgeting, or Finance	4.1	3.6
Administrative/ Managerial	53.2	53.0
Business	1.0	1.7
Engineering, or Architecture	10.8	10.5
Investigations	0.7	2.8
Legal	8.5	8.2
Math or Statistics	1.4	0.4
Medical Sciences	1.4	1.7
Personnel Management or Industrial Relations	1.7	1.7
Physical Sciences	4.7	5.8
Social Science, Economics, Psychology or Social Welfare	4.1	2.4
Other	8.5	8.2

a/ Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding. Percentages are based on an estimated 4,241 respondents employed as of the end of 1985 and 466 respondents who left SES in 1985.

b/ All percentages in this column are estimates and vary by no more than 6.2 percentage points higher or lower than the given estimate.

APPENDIX III

The largest block of former SES member respondents fell in the 55 to 60 age group, and most respondents chose to retire within 3 years after being eligible.

Table III.2:
Comparison of the Ages of
1985 SES Members With SES Members
Who Left Their Positions in 1985 a_/

Age in years	Percent of 1985 SES members b_/	Percent of SES members who left in 1985
Less than 35	0.3	0.2
35 to less than 40	4.5	3.9
40 to less than 45	15.6	9.7
45 to less than 50	22.5	12.0
50 to less than 55	25.2	17.0
55 to less than 60	21.4	32.2
60 to less than 62	3.1	8.4
62 to less than 65	4.5	10.1
65 or over	2.8	6.7

a_/ Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding. Percentages are based on an estimated 4,155 respondents employed as of the end of 1985 and 466 respondents who left SES in 1985.

b_/ All percentages in this column are estimates and vary by no more than 5.0 percentage points higher or lower than the given estimate.

Table III.3:

Length of Time SES Members Remained in Their Position After Becoming Eligible for Retirement

Length of time	Number	Percent a/
Immediately after eligible	26	10.6
Less than 6 months	28	11.4
6 months to less than 1 year	16	6.5
1 to less than 3 years	87	35.5
3 to less than 6 years	60	24.5
6 years or more	28	11.4
Subtotal	245	99.9
Not eligible for optional retirement	218	
Total respondents	463 b/	

a/ Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

b/ Six did not respond.

About two-thirds of SES members took another paid position after leaving the SES. More of them took a position in business or industry than in any other employment area.

Table III.4:
New Positions Taken by
SES Members Who Left Their
Previous SES Positions in 1985 a/

Positions taken	Number	Percent of total
Business or Industry	105	22.5
Consulting	82	17.6
Federal Government	54	11.6
Other	36	7.7
Nonprofit	22	4.7
Academia	18	3.9
Subtotal	317	68.0
No position taken	149	32.0
Total respondents	466 b/	100.0

a/ Numbers and percentages exclude nonresponses.

b/ Three did not respond.

Base salaries increased for 48.7 percent of those who accepted new jobs, decreased for 24.7 percent, and remained about the same for 26.6 percent.[1]

[1]For more information, see Answers to Selected Salary-Related Questions (GAO/GGD-87-36FS, Jan. 9, 1987).

As table III.5 shows, the educational levels of those who left SES were approximately the same as the levels of those who were employed as of December 31, 1985. Of those who left, 57 percent had received at least a Master's degree and nearly a third had received a Ph.D, M.D., or law degree.

Table III.5:
Educational Level of 1985 SES Members and SES Members Who Left Their Positions in 1985 a/

Highest educational level or degree attained	Percent of 1985 SES members b/	Percent of SES members who left in 1985
High school graduate or equivalent	0.0	0.2
Associate's degree or some college without a bachelor's degree	2.7	5.8
Graduated from a 4-year college or postgraduate study without a degree	23.2	32.0
Master's degree	29.3	25.6
Doctorate or Ph.D.	24.0	17.3
Law degree	11.1	12.6
Medical degree	1.7	2.0
Other	8.1	4.7

a/ Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding. Percentages are based on an estimated 4,270 respondents employed as of the end of 1985 and 469 respondents who left SES in 1985.

b/ All percentages in this column are estimates and vary by no more than 5.2 percentage points higher or lower than the given estimate.

These former SES members had considerable experience as federal employees. Almost 75 percent of the respondents had served for at least 20 years, and 30 percent had 30 or more years of federal experience. More respondents joined the federal government at the GS-5 level than any other level. Moreover, much of their experience had come at the executive (GS-16 or above, or SES) level: Thirty-three percent of the respondents had held a position at this level for between 5 and 10 years, and 41 percent had been in an executive position for 10 or more years before leaving. As table III.6 shows, a greater proportion of SES members who left in fiscal year 1985 had 30 years or more of federal service compared to those employed as of December 31, 1985. As table III.7 indicates, the years of federal executive experience of those who left in fiscal year 1985 is roughly comparable to the profile of those who were employed as of December 31, 1985.

Table III.6:
Years of Federal Service for 1985 SES Members and SES Members Who Left Their Positions in 1985 a_/

Years of federal service b_/	Percent of 1985 SES members c_/	Percent of SES members who left in 1985
Less than 3 years	0.3	1.3
3 to less than 5 years	1.0	0.9
5 to less than 10 years	4.0	5.6
10 to less than 20 years	32.2	20.3
20 to less than 30 years	51.3	42.0
30 years or more	11.1	30.0

a_/ Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding. Percentages are based on an estimated 4,284 respondents employed as of the end of 1985 and 467 respondents who left SES in 1985.

b_/ Excluding military service.

c_/ All percentages in this column are estimates and vary by no more than 6.1 percentage points higher or lower than the given estimate.

Table III.7:
Years of Federal Executive Service for 1985 SES Members and SES Members Who Left Their Positions in 1985 a/

Years of service in a federal executive position	Percent of 1985 SES members b/	Percent of SES members who left in 1985
Less than 1 year	2.7	1.3
1 to less than 3 years	8.1	6.0
3 to less than 5 years	16.6	18.1
5 to less than 10 years	38.0	33.3
10 to less than 15 years	22.4	23.2
15 to less than 20 years	8.8	13.5
20 years or more	3.4	4.5

a/ Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding. Percentages are based on an estimated 4,241 respondents employed as of the end of 1985 and 465 respondents who left SES in 1985.

b/ All percentages in this column are estimates and vary by no more than 5.7 percentage points higher or lower than the given estimate.

These former members of SES appear to have been well-qualified by measures other than experience: More than one-half of them had received at least one bonus during their SES career, and over a third had received two or more bonuses. Moreover, 42.7 percent of this group had received one or more meritorious and distinguished service awards in the course of their SES careers.

Although the written comments obtained from the survey suggest that many former SES employees enjoyed their government careers, few recommended a similar career to others--62.9 percent, or 290 of the respondents said that they would advise or strongly advise someone beginning a career to enter the private sector rather than the public sector. Only 72 (15.6 percent) of the 461 former SES members responding to this question would advise or strongly advise public sector work over private sector work.

APPENDIX IV

GAO ID: /__/__/__/__/__/__/ (1-6)

U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Survey of Attrition in the Senior Executive Service

Former SES Members

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. General Accounting Office, an agency of the Congress, is reviewing trends in Senior Executive Service (SES) attrition and the outlook for future retention of its members. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on why career appointees left SES. It is being sent to all SES members who separated during fiscal year 1985.

Most of the questions can be easily answered by checking boxes or filling in blanks. Space has been provided for any additional comments at the end of the questionnaire. If necessary, additional pages may be attached.

Your responses will be treated confidentially. They will be combined with others and reported only in summary form. The questionnaire is numbered only to aid us in our follow-up efforts and will not be used to identify you with your response. We cannot develop meaningful information without your frank and honest answers.

The questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete. If you have questions, please call Ms. Mary Lane Renninger on (202) 275-2982 or Ms. Pat Gallatly on (202) 275-5724.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope within 10 days of receipt. In the event the envelope is misplaced, the return address is:

U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
Ms. Mary Lane Renninger
Room 5150
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Thank you for your help.

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. What is the highest educational level or degree that you have attained? (CHECK ONE) (7

1. 1 High school graduate or equivalent
2. 27 Some college without a degree
3. 67 Graduated from a 4-year college
4. 83 Postgraduate study without a degree
5. 120 Master's degree
6. 81 Doctorate/Ph.D.
7. 59 Law degree
8. 9 Medical degree
9. 22 Other, please specify _____

0 No Answer

2. How many years was your total federal service (excluding military service)? (CHECK ONE) (8

1. 6 Less than 3 years
2. 4 3 to less than 5 years
3. 26 5 to less than 10 years
4. 95 10 to less than 20 years
5. 196 20 to less than 30 years
6. 140 30 years or more

2 No Answer

APPENDIX IV

3. How many years of active duty military service, if any, did you serve? (IF NONE, ENTER "0")

Range 1-40 years (9-10)
Mean 5.7 years
(YEARS OF SERVICE)

4. What was your grade or ES level when you joined the federal government?

Range GS 1-18 Range ES 1-8 (11-13)
Mean GS 9 or Mean ES 4.6
(GRADE LEVEL) (ES LEVEL)

5. Of the following occupational categories, which best describes your overall background (based on your education, training, and skills) prior to entering SES? (CHECK ONE)

(14-15)

1. 30 Accounting, budgeting, or finance
2. 91 Administrative/Managerial
3. 12 Business
4. 101 Engineering or architecture
5. 16 Investigations
6. 53 Legal
7. 7 Math or statistics
8. 13 Medical sciences
9. 9 Personnel management or industrial relations
10. 59 Physical sciences
11. 26 Social science, economics, psychology or social welfare
12. 47 Other, please specify _____

5 No Answer

II. SES EXPERIENCE

6. How many years were you in an executive position in the federal government (SES and GS-16, 17, 18 or equivalent)? (CHECK ONE)

(16)

1. 6 Less than 1 year
2. 28 1 to less than 3 years
3. 84 3 to less than 5 years
4. 155 5 to less than 10 years
5. 108 10 to less than 15 years
6. 63 15 to less than 20 years
7. 21 20 years or more

4 No Answer

7. Which of the following best describes the way you separated from your SES position? (CHECK ONE)

(17)

1. 247 Retirement: optional → (CONTINUE)
2. 28 Retirement: early out due to RIF or job abolishment
3. 36 Retirement: early out to avoid geographic reassignment
4. 7 Retirement: disability
5. 91 Resignation → (SKIP TO QUESTION 8)
6. 0 Separation in RIF or job abolishment
7. 35 Retreat to GS-15 position
8. 21 Other, please specify _____

4 No Answer

APPENDIX IV

8. How long after you became eligible to retire did you leave your position in SES? (CHECK ONE) (18)

1. 26 Immediately
2. 28 Less than 6 months
3. 16 6 months to less than 1 year
4. 87 1 to less than 3 years
5. 60 3 to less than 6 years
6. 28 6 years or more

2 No Answer

9. When you left your position with the federal government, approximately how much annual leave and sick leave did you have? (ENTER NUMBERS IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING: 11 HOURS OR 21 DAYS OR 31 MONTHS.)

Did not use this question

	Accumulated Annual Leave	Sick Leave	
1. Hours			(19-26)
or			
2. Days			(27-34)
or			
3. Months			(35-40)
4. Don't know			(41-42)

10. How old were you when you left your SES position? (CHECK ONE) (43)

1. 1 Less than 35 years old
2. 18 35 to less than 40 years old
3. 45 40 to less than 45 years old
4. 56 45 to less than 50 years old
5. 79 50 to less than 55 years old
6. 150 55 to less than 60 years old
7. 39 60 to less than 62 years old
8. 47 62 to less than 65 years old
9. 31 65 years old or over

3 No Answer

11. In what federal agency did you hold your last SES position? (44-47)

See Appendix V
(AGENCY)

12. What was your ES level when you left SES? (48)

Did not use this question
(ES LEVEL)

13. Of the following occupational categories, which one best describes the work you did in your last SES position? (CHECK ONE) (47-48)

1. 17 Accounting, budgeting, or finance
2. 247 Administrative/Managerial
3. 8 Business
4. 49 Engineering or architecture
5. 13 Investigations
6. 38 Legal
7. 2 Math or statistics
8. 8 Medical sciences
9. 8 Personnel management or industrial relations
10. 27 Physical sciences
11. 11 Social science, economics, psychology or social welfare
12. 38 Other, please specify _____

3 No Answer

14. What was the geographical location of your last SES position? (CHECK ONE) (49)

1. 334 Washington, D.C. metropolitan area
2. 130 Other, please specify _____

3 No Answer

APPENDIX IV

15. Since the inception of SES in 1979, how many SES bonuses, if any, did you receive in your SES career? (CHECK ONE) (50)

1. 202 None
2. 107 1 bonus
3. 60 2 bonuses
4. 38 3 bonuses
5. 25 4 bonuses
6. 11 5 bonuses
7. 4 6 or more bonuses

2 No Answer

16. How many meritorious and distinguished service awards, if any, did you receive in your SES career? (CHECK ONE) (51)

1. 266 None
2. 120 1 award
3. 55 2 awards
4. 10 3 awards
5. 13 More than 3 awards

5 No Answer

III. POST-SES EXPERIENCE

17. After leaving SES, did you take another paid position? (CHECK ONE) (52)

1. 320 Yes (CONTINUE)
2. 149 No (SKIP TO QUESTION 30)

0 No Answer

NOTE: QUESTIONS 18 THROUGH 29 REFER TO THE FIRST POSITION YOU TOOK AFTER LEAVING SES. IF YOU TOOK MORE THAN ONE POSITION AT THAT TIME, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 18 THROUGH 29 FOR YOUR MOST HIGHLY PAID POSITION (I.E., BASE SALARY PLUS BENEFITS). DO NOT INCLUDE UNPAID VOLUNTEER WORK.

18. Did you seek this new position, or were you recruited for it? (CHECK ONE) (53)

1. 158 Sought the position
2. 154 Was recruited for the position

6 No Answer

19. Were you considered self-employed in this new position? (CHECK ONE) (54)

1. 102 Yes
2. 214 No

4 No Answer

20. Was this position full-time or part-time? (CHECK ONE) (55)

1. 241 Full-time (i.e., 32 or more hours per week)
2. 76 Part-time (i.e., less than 32 hours per week)

3 No Answer

21. Was this a permanent or temporary position? (CHECK ONE) (56)

1. 258 Permanent
2. 57 Temporary

5 No Answer

22. Which of the following best describes the employment area of your new position? (CHECK ONE) (57)

1. 18 Academia
2. 105 Business or industry
3. 82 Consulting
4. 54 Federal government
5. 22 Non-profit organization
6. 2 Lobbying organization
7. 5 State or local government
8. 29 Other, please specify: _____

3 No Answer

APPENDIX IV

23. Which of the following occupational categories best describes your new position? (CHECK ONE) (58-59)

1. 12 Accounting, budgeting, or finance
2. 75 Administrative/Managerial
3. 30 Business
4. 55 Engineering or Architecture
5. 10 Investigations
6. 38 Legal
7. 4 Math or statistics
8. 7 Medical sciences
9. 6 Personnel management or industrial relations
10. 29 Physical sciences
11. 11 Social science, economics, psychology or social welfare
12. 41 Other, please specify _____

2 No Answer

24. Did your initial base salary increase, decrease, or remain about the same in your new position as compared with your SES salary? (CHECK ONE) (60)

1. 154 Increased — (CONTINUE)
2. 76 Decreased — (CONTINUE)
3. 64 Remained about the same — (SKIP TO QUESTION 26.)

4 No Answer

25. By approximately what amount did your base salary change from your SES salary? (CHECK ONE) (61)

1. 12 Less than $1,000
2. 20 $1,000 to less than $3,000
3. 8 $3,000 to less than $5,000
4. 25 $5,000 to less than $10,000
5. 63 $10,000 to less than $20,000
6. 34 $20,000 to less than $30,000
7. 25 $30,000 to less than $40,000
8. 11 $40,000 to less than $50,000
9. 36 $50,000 or more

2 No Answer

26. Overall, did the value of your benefits (e.g. life insurance, pension, etc.) increase, decrease or remain about the same in that position? (CHECK ONE) (62)

1. 135 Increased (CONTINUE)
2. 64 Decreased — (SKIP TO QUESTION 28)
3. 109 Remained about the same — (SKIP TO QUESTION 28)
4. 7 Don't know — (SKIP TO QUESTION 28)

5 No Answer

27. Which benefits increased in that new position? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

1. 84 Retirement (63)
2. 98 Life insurance (64)
3. 0 Medical insurance (65)
4. 24 Annual leave (66)
5. 25 Sick leave (67)
6. 98 Expense account (68)
7. 47 Other, please specify _____ (69)

APPENDIX IV

28. Overall, did other conditions (e.g., office space, vehicles, parking, etc.) improve, worsen, or remain about the same in that new position? (CHECK ONE) (70)

1. 10 Greatly worsened
2. 34 Worsened
3. 115 Remained about the same
4. 67 Improved
5. 87 Greatly improved
7 No Answer

29. Are you still in that position? (CHECK ONE) (71)

1. 262 Yes
2. 28 No

10 No Answer

(CONTINUE)

4. REASONS FOR LEAVING

30. Listed below are a number of specific possible reasons for resigning or retiring from SES. How important or unimportant was each of the following in your decision to leave SES? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW. IF NOT APPLICABLE, CHECK BOX 6, N/A)

	Little or no importance	Some importance	Moderate importance	Great importance	Very great importance	Not applicable	No Answer
Retirement (Check "N/A" if you did not retire)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Desire to retire (i.e., take things a little easier)	122	52	53	35	38	158	(7) 11
2. Desire to avoid proposed revisions which could decrease retirement benefits	102	63	41	49	56	144	(8) 14
3. Desire to take advantage of retirement cost-of-living increases	200	44	19	9	8	174	(9) 13
Salary/Benefits/Job Security							
4. Salary not adequate	157	61	63	54	49	74	(10) 11
5. Fringe benefits not adequate	201	65	55	33	18	85	(11) 12
6. Lack of job security	308	21	23	10	7	90	(12) 10
7. Desire to obtain social security coverage	293	38	15	3	6	102	(13) 12
SES Bonuses/Awards							
8. Too few bonuses available	136	67	67	68	71	49	(14) 11
9. Unfair distribution of bonuses (e.g., favoritism)	133	44	62	66	103	55	(15) 6
10. Too few rank awards available	171	57	64	52	36	59	(16) 10
11. Unfair distribution of rank awards (e.g., favoritism)	161	42	50	52	91	63	(17) 10

APPENDIX IV

(Question 30 continued - Importance of specific reasons for leaving SES)

	Little or no importance	Some importance	Moderate importance	Great importance	Very great importance	Not applicable	No Answer
Job Demands	1	2	3	4	5	6	
12. Job required too much work	305	29	20	7	8	92	(116) 8
13. Job required too little work	235	16	9	14	13	172	(119) 10
14. Job created too much stress	216	52	36	32	29	76	(120) 8
15. Job required too much travel	306	26	16	4	0	108	(121) 9
16. Job required too little travel	304	8	9	1	0	137	(122) 10
17. Job required too many hours	289	39	23	12	9	88	(123) 9
Job Content							
18. Job was too challenging	312	7	4	2	5	130	(124) 9
19. Job was not challenging enough	188	28	38	29	40	138	(125) 8
20. Job was not meaningful enough	186	24	28	47	30	125	(126) 9
21. Job required too much time for administrative duties	203	60	45	33	27	93	(127) 6
Assignments/Mobility							
22. Desired assignment not available	213	15	21	15	37	160	(128) 8
23. Desired geographic reassignment not available	238	11	15	4	14	179	(129) 8
24. Desire to avoid geographic reassignment	228	11	5	7	30	180	(130) 8
25. Desire to avoid reassignment within the same geographical area	251	3	4	1	6	193	(131) 9

(Question 30 continued - Importance of specific reasons for leaving SES)

	Little or no importance	Some importance	Moderate importance	Great importance	Very great importance	Not applicable	No Answer
Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	
26. Too little funding available for training, travel, etc.	209	57	52	29	16	100	(32) 6
27. Staffing level too low to accomplish job	136	71	63	43	41	86	(33) 9
28. Equipment provided inadequate to accomplish job	214	58	43	16	10	120	(34) 8
29. Resources allocated improperly	161	53	57	49	40	100	(35) 9
30. Dissatisfaction with the physical work environment	234	41	38	17	11	117	(36) 11
Agency Staff							
31. Dissatisfaction with the work of subordinate staff	266	33	14	14	5	127	(37) 10
32. Dissatisfaction with co-workers	264	33	16	8	8	130	(38) 10
33. Dissatisfaction with supervisor	158	37	43	40	78	104	(39) 9
34. Dissatisfaction with top management	113	40	49	76	105	81	(40) 5
35. Dissatisfaction with political appointees	136	34	37	39	118	96	(41) 9
Agency Management Practices							
36. Too much political interference	158	55	33	34	90	91	(42) 8
37. Dissatisfaction with general agency policies	159	62	32	34	55	79	(43) 8
38. Dissatisfaction with agency management practices (i.e., amount of freedom given to manage job as saw fit)	136	67	48	30	96	76	(44) 6
39. Dissatisfaction with communications in the agency	152	52	53	48	74	79	(45) 11

APPENDIX IV

(Question 30 continued - Importance of specific reasons for leaving SES)

	Little or no importance	Some importance	Moderate importance	Great importance	Very great importance	Not applicable	No Answer
Government Employment	1	2	3	4	5	6	
40. Frustration with bureaucracy - (administrative/bureaucratic requirements)	94	94	97	57	67	54	6 (46)
41. Frustration with criticism of federal workers by press, politicians, or public	121	69	72	70	83	47	7 (47)
42. Concern about provisions in Ethics-in-Government Act and/or disclosure requirements	272	44	38	21	10	77	7 (48)
43. Frustration with proposed and actual changes to compensation (i.e., pay, retirement, etc.)	135	56	56	77	87	52	6 (49)
Personal Development/Goals/Expectations							
44. Opportunities for career development (i.e., growing through job) were inadequate	179	46	43	53	48	89	9 (50)
45. Opportunities for career advancement (i.e., higher level of responsibility) were inadequate	159	47	47	63	59	85	9 (51)
46. Personal goals and values differed from organization's	180	47	42	46	37	90	(52) 7
47. Aptitude, abilities, or interests did not correspond with what the job required	246	37	24	14	16	124	8 (53)
48. Job did not meet expectations	234	37	26	16	21	125	(54) 10
49. Realized goals in the position and desired a change	170	34	39	52	52	93	(55) 7

APPENDIX IV

(Question 30 continued - Importance of specific reasons for leaving SES)

Other	Little or no importance	Some importance	Moderate importance	Great importance	Very great importance	Not applicable	No Answer
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
90. Personal concerns not related to work (e.g., health, spouse's career, etc.)	223	42	28	26	26	116	(56) 8
91. Economic conditions favored finding a new job	213	26	36	37	23	123	(57) 11
92. Personal career plans changed	208	34	36	30	25	126	(58) 10
93. Desire to geographically relocate	242	18	17	10	21	150	(59) 11
94. Was asked to leave/forced out	185	3	6	7	29	226	(60) 13
95. Other, please specify _____ _____ _____	6	-	3	4	79	22	355 (61)

APPENDIX IV

31. The following chart summarizes the reasons for leaving SES you have just considered. How important or unimportant was each of the following categories in your decision to leave SES? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW)

Importance in Decision to Leave	Little or no importance 1	Some importance 2	Moderate importance 3	Great importance 4	Very great importance 5	Not applicable 6	No Answer
1. My personal desire to retire	93	51	48	66	82	119	(62) 10
2. Overall dissatisfaction with salary and benefits	163	68	63	53	50	63	(63) 9
3. Overall dissatisfaction with SES bonuses and awards	120	81	72	60	79	49	(64) 8
4. Overall dissatisfaction with the job demands	250	56	27	27	20	79	(65) 10
5. Overall dissatisfaction with job content	232	44	30	35	32	86	(66) 10
6. Overall dissatisfaction with job assignments/mobility	257	29	19	28	25	99	(67) 12
7. Overall dissatisfaction with resources provided to accomplish job	172	76	64	42	30	75	(68) 10
8. Overall dissatisfaction with agency staff	189	66	52	45	23	80	(69) 14
9. Overall dissatisfaction with agency management practices	119	63	58	64	92	60	(70) 13
10. Overall dissatisfaction with government employment	169	59	63	49	46	73	(71) 10
11. Overall dissatisfaction with opportunities for personal and career development	186	65	43	49	40	73	(72) 13
12. Overall dissatisfaction with uncertainty of future compensation levels	163	64	53	54	54	60	(73) 11

APPENDIX IV

32. Consider the reasons in question 31 for which you answered "great importance" or "very great importance". If any of those reasons had changed to your satisfaction, would you have stayed in your SES position? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW IN WHICH YOU CHECKED "GREAT IMPORTANCE" OR "VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE" IN QUESTION 31)

If Changed, Would You Have Stayed?	Definitely would have stayed if changed (1)	Probably would have stayed if changed (2)	Uncertain (3)	Probably wouldn't have stayed if changed (4)	Definitely wouldn't have stayed if changed (5)	Not applicable (6)	No Answer
1. [redacted]							
2. Overall dissatisfaction with salary and benefits	22	33	20	4	0		(7) 4
3. Overall dissatisfaction with SES bonuses and awards	21	73	24	14	2		(8) 3
4. Overall dissatisfaction with the job demands	11	19	9	4	2		(9) 2
5. Overall dissatisfaction with job content	22	23	9	10	0		(10) 3
6. Overall dissatisfaction with job assignments/flexibility	25	17	4	3	2		(11) 2
7. Overall dissatisfaction with resources provided to accomplish job	12	30	14	7	2		(12) 7
8. Overall dissatisfaction with agency staff	22	21	9	12	0		(13) 4
9. Overall dissatisfaction with agency management practices	60	61	11	13	1		(14) 10
10. Overall dissatisfaction with government employment	30	35	16	6	6		(15) 2
11. Overall dissatisfaction with opportunities for personal and career development	29	36	11	5	3		(16) 5
12. Overall dissatisfaction with uncertainty of future compensation levels	23	55	18	4	1		(17-18)

APPENDIX IV

33. Overall, would you advise someone beginning a career to go into the public or private sector? (CHECK ONE) (19)

1. 19 Strongly advise the public sector over the private sector
2. 53 Advise the public sector over the private sector
3. 69 Undecided
4. 158 Advise the private sector over the public sector
5. 132 Strongly advise the private sector over the public sector

8 No Answer

34. If you have any additional comments regarding any previous question or general comments concerning your employment in SES, please use the space provided below. If necessary, use additional sheets. (20)

251 had comments

218 had no comments

Thank you for your help!

APPENDIX V

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SES MEMBERS, NUMBER OF SES MEMBERS WHO LEFT, AND NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS BY AGENCY - FISCAL YEAR 1985

Agency	Average number of SES members[a]	Number of SES members who separated	Number of respondents
Arms Control and Disarmament Agency	18.0	2	1
Board for International Broadcasting	3.5	1	1
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	17.5	2	2
Department of Agriculture	279.5	28	19
Department of Commerce	370.5	34	27
Office of the Secretary of Defense	333.0	36	32
Department of the Air Force	192.0	14	8
Department of the Army	326.5	34	23
Department of the Navy	408.5	38	33
Department of Education	42.5	6	5
Department of Energy	387.0	37	30
Department of Health and Human Services	482.0	48	33
Department of Housing and Urban Development	79.5	4	3
Department of the Interior	222.0	24	19
Department of Justice	208.5	17	13
Department of Labor	140.0	17	7
Department of State	79.0	4	2
Department of Transportation	304.5	31	25
Department of the Treasury	486.5	57	42
Environmental Protection Agency	206.5	9	8
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	35.5	2	2
Executive Office of the President	15.0	4	2
Farm Credit Administration	11.0	1	0
Federal Communications Commission	32.0	3	1
Federal Emergency Management Agency	42.5	9	8
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	33.5	4	3
Federal Home Loan Bank Board	7.5	2	1
Federal Labor Relations Authority	18.5	2	2
Federal Maritime Commission	7.0	2	1
Federal Trade Commission	22.5	3	3
General Services Administration	99.5	9	8
International Development Cooperation Agency	31.5	2	1
International Trade Commission	7.0	2	2
Interstate Commerce Commission	26.5	2	1
Merit Systems Protection Board	15.0	2	1
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	426.0	49	43

APPENDIX V

AVERAGE NUMBER OF SES MEMBERS, NUMBER OF SES MEMBERS WHO LEFT, AND NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS BY AGENCY - FISCAL YEAR 1985

Agency	Average number of SES members[a]	Number of SES members who separated	Number of respondents
National Archives and Records Administration	8.0	1	1
National Capital Planning Commission	4.5	1	1
National Credit Union Administration	9.0	2	2
National Endowment for the Humanities	2.5	2	2
National Labor Relations Board	55.0	4	2
National Science Foundation	93.5	5	2
National Transportation Safety Board	8.5	1	1
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	200.5	17	12
Office of Management and Budget	66.0	6	6
Office of Personnel Management	44.0	7	5
Railroad Retirement Board	8.5	1	1
Securities and Exchange Commission	43.0	4	2
Small Business Administration	31.5	7	6
Veterans Administration	129.5	16	14

[a]Average calculated using OPM data on the number of filled career SES positions as of September 30, 1984 and September 30, 1985.

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